

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3114
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2006
NEW NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL POLICY
Kaushal Shri Raghuvir Singh;Surenran Shri Chengara

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the Union Government proposes to set up a Pharmaceutical Advisory Forum at the National level and advisory committee in the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority at its Head Office and in different regions of the country ;
- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) Whether the Government has formulated the New National Pharmaceutical Policy ;
- (d) If so, the details thereof;
- (e) Whether the new National Pharmaceutical Policy will lead to decrease in the prices of medicines; and
- (f) If so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a)&(b): The Government have constituted a Pharmaceutical Advisory Forum on the 26th July, 2004 to have meaningful dialogue amongst all the stakeholders on various issues concerning the drug policy. The Chairman of the Forum is the Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers. Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers, Health Ministers of all the States/ UTs, Secretaries, Department of Health, Chemicals and Petrochemicals, DCG(I) & Drug Controllers of all States/UTs, Pharma Industry Associations, Chemists Associations & Consumer bodies are its members. Two meetings of the Forum have been held on 11.2.2006 and 23.9.2006 at New Delhi.

The Government have drafted a National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 wherein it has been proposed to set up Advisory Committees to provide a standing platform for regular inter- action with industry, consumers and State Governments at the Head Office level in Delhi and 6 Regional Offices in the country namely Northern Region, Southern Region, Western Region, Central Region, Eastern region and North-Eastern region.

(c)to(f) : The Hon'ble Supreme Hon'ble Court vide its order dated 10.03.2003 in SLP no.3668/ 2003 directed the Government, inter-alia, to consider and formulate appropriate criteria for ensuring that essential and life saving drugs do not fall out of price control. In pursuance of the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court a Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy 2006 was prepared by Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals proposing price control for 354 drugs with specified strengths mentioned in the National Lists of Essential Medicine

(NLEM) 2003. The Policy is under finalization at present. A joint Committee with members from the drug industry had been constituted under the Chairpersonship of Secretary (C&PC) to suggest, inter-alia, interpretation of order dated 10.03.2003 of the Supreme Court in SLP 3668/2003. The joint Committee has submitted its report to the Government on 30.11.2006 and the same will be taken into consideration while finalizing the National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006.

Several measures for making cheaper medicines available to common man are being proposed in the Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy e.g. National Health Insurance Policy for the BPL families, Larger allocation for National Illness Assistance Fund/State Illness Assistance Funds, District Illness Assistance Fund, Revolving Funds for BPL families to be set up in all the Central Government hospitals. Rajasthan model of Medicare Relief Societies is proposed to be replicated in other States also. Scheme of District level Drug Banks in States/UTs, Setting up of Cancer Medicines Assistance Fund etc. are also included in the proposed policy.